



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
New England District

696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742-2751

PUBLIC NOTICE

Date: January 27, 2009
Comment Period Ends: February 27, 2009
File Number: NAE-2008-410
In Reply Refer To: Richard Roach
Or by e-mail: Richard.A.Roach
@usace.army.mil

Request for Comments

Granite Reliable Power, LLC (a subsidiary of Noble Environmental Power, 8 Railroad Avenue, Suite 8, Second Floor, Essex, CT 06426) has applied for a Corps Permit, under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, to fill waters and wetlands in conjunction with the development of a 100 megawatt wind energy facility in Coos County, NH. The project would affect 14 acres of waters and wetlands. Compensatory mitigation is also proposed. The strategy for wetland compensatory wetland mitigation is to place 860 acres of forest land, at the headwaters of Phillips Brook, next to Nash Stream State Forest, into permanent protection and to do some limited waterway restoration and possibly creation within the protected tract. Other wildlife compensation, primarily preservation of approximately 250 acres above the 2700 foot contour within the existing tracts on Owl Head Mountain and Mount Kelsey, is also proposed. More description of the proposed mitigation can be found at the back of this notice. The Corps requests that interested parties read this notice, study the proposal, consider the matter, and give us your comments.

At present, the Corps is planning to prepare an Environmental Assessment ("EA") on the proposed work. The Corps plans to complete the EA after the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee ("NH SEC"), which is also evaluating the application, renders its state decision. The Corps is soliciting comments on both the project and the range of issues to be addressed in our environmental documentation.

ACTIVITY: Place fill in a total of approximately 14 acres of waters and wetlands in conjunction with the development of a 100 megawatt wind energy facility in Coos County, NH. The proposed facility has numerous project elements. They include road improvements and new roads to access 33 tower sites on several ridge tops on which would be erected 80 meter tall monopole towers that would in turn support Vesta "V 90" 3 megawatt wind powered generators. These windmills would stand 400 feet tall. Other project elements involve constructing power lines for collecting the power generated and transmitting it to the regional power grid. A detailed description and plans of the activity are attached. In addition, copies of the plans and various illustrations and figures can be obtained on the webpage of the project's engineering consultant at:
<http://windpark.horizonsengineering.com/>

WATERWAY AND LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED WORK

The work proposed is a linear project, about 15 miles long, impacting scores of waters and wetlands tributary to the Androscoggin and Upper Ammonoosuc Rivers in the towns of Dummer, Millsfield, Odell, Ervings Location, and Dixville in Coos County, NH. The proposed location is on the USGS Dummer Ponds and

Dixville Notch quadrangle sheets, roughly along a line that extends from Dixville Peak in Dixville (Latitude 44° 50' N, Longitude 074° 19' W) to Bickford Hill (Latitude 44° 38' N, Longitude 071 ° 16' W) in Dummer.

AUTHORITY

Permits are required pursuant to:

- ☐ Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899
- ☒ Section 404 of the Clean Water Act
- ☐ Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act).

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which may reasonably accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are: conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural value, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain value, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food production and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

Where the activity involves the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States or the transportation of dredged material for the purpose of disposing it in ocean waters, the evaluation of the impact of the activity in the public interest will also include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, U.S Environmental Protection Agency, under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act, and/or Section 103 of the Marine Protection Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 as amended.

SECTION 106 COORDINATION

Based on his initial review, the District Engineer has determined that the proposed work may impact properties listed in, or eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places. Additional review and consultation to fulfil requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, will be ongoing as part of the permit review process.

ENDANGERED SPECIES CONSULTATION

The New England District, Army Corps of Engineers has reviewed the list of species protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended ("ESA"), which might occur at the proposed project site during the construction and subsequent operation/use period sought by the applicant. We are in the process of evaluating the potential for impacts to the Canada lynx (*Lynx Canadensis*) a species listed as threatened under the ESA. We will continue to coordinate this effort with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game. Additional review and consultation to fulfil requirements of the ESA, will be ongoing as part of the permit review process.

The following additional necessary authorizations have been applied for:

- (☒) Permit, License or Assent from State.
- (☐) Permit from Local Wetland Agency or Conservation Commission.
- (☒) Water Quality Certification in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.

It should be noted that the applicant is also applying for the necessary state authorization through the New

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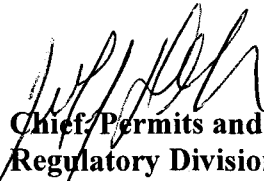
Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee ("NH SEC") process. Much information about the proposed project can be obtained by going to NH SEC website located at the following address: www.nhsec.state.nh.us. (Select Current projects and then Granite Reliable Power, LLC.) In addition, opportunity for public input will be available through the Site Evaluation Committee's hearings which are scheduled for the second week of March 2009. Information about the location and schedule for the hearings will be available on the website. A Corps of Engineers representative will be attending those hearings. The Corps will receive transcripts of testimony received at those hearings, which will become part of the administrative record of our decision.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether and under what circumstances to issue a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity. Anyone wishing to comment is encouraged to do so. **Comments should be submitted in writing by the above date.** If you have any questions, please contact Richard Roach at (978) 318-or by e-mail at Richard.A.Roach@usace.army.mil.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider the application. Requests for a public hearing shall specifically state the reasons for holding a public hearing. The Corps holds public hearings for the purpose of obtaining public comments when that is the best means for understanding a wide variety of concerns from a diverse segment of the public.

The initial determinations made herein will be reviewed in light of facts submitted in response to this notice. All comments will be considered a matter of public record. Copies of letters of objection will be forwarded to the applicant who will normally be requested to contact objectors directly in an effort to reach an understanding.

This is a request for comments. This notice is not an authorization to do any work.


Chief, Permits and Enforcement Branch
Regulatory Division

For more information on the New England District Corps of Engineers programs, visit our website at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil>

If you would prefer not to continue receiving Public Notices, please contact Ms. Tina Chaisson at (978) 318-8058 or e-mail her at bettina.m.chaisson@usace.army.mil. You may also check here () and return this portion of the Public Notice to: Bettina Chaisson, Regulatory Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 696

Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

The material below contains more detailed information about the proposed work including its purpose, impacts and the proponent's efforts to avoid minimize and compensate for unavoidable adverse impacts to aquatic resources.

The work includes the discharge of dredged or fill material for development of a wind energy project. The purpose of the work is the development of an economically viable wind power project in NH.

The work is described on the enclosed plans entitled "Granite Reliable Power, LLC, Granite Reliable Power Wind Park, Coos County, New Hampshire," on 10 sheets, and variously dated.

Granite Reliable Power's 33 Vesta Wind System's "V90" wind turbines are proposed to be built on private land within three forest tracts, comprising 80,000 acres, in Coos County between Dummer and Dixville. The project lies generally east of the Nash Stream Forest, west of Route 16, south of route 26 and north of Route 110. Project elements include: the upgrading of about 19 miles of existing private logging roads; the construction of about 12 miles of new access roads, 6 miles ascending from the valley floor to the ridge tops and 6 miles along the ridge tops of Dixville Peak, Mount Kelsey, Owlhead Mountain and Fishbrook Ridge. Other project elements include: a 34.5 kV electrical collection line, to gather the power from the wind generators and deliver it to a new electrical substation to be built approximately 1.5 miles south of the southernmost turbine string on Fishbrook Ridge. A 6 mile long, 115 kV electrical interconnection line would be constructed along side Dummer Pond Road to deliver the power generated to the existing 115 kV electric transmission line owned by Public Service Company of New Hampshire. The connection would take place in the vicinity of the intersection of Route 16 and Dummer Pond Road, just west of the Pontoocook Reservoir. This would be the southern terminus of the proposed facility.

The regulated discharges which are subject of this permit application would result from the widening of the existing roads, the construction of new roads, the construction of pads for the erection of the wind turbine towers, the construction of the electrical substation and maintenance facility and various lay down areas to facilitate construction.

The project planning team, being aware of the need to avoid, minimize and compensate to the maximum degree practicable adverse affects to wetlands, has attempted to do this by locating the wind generators along four strings on ridge tops east of an existing logging road which runs generally from the bottom of the project area to the top. This has allowed them to take advantage of the existing disturbance created by the logging roads and to avoid to a large degree the need to cross undisturbed wetlands with new roads. An earlier iteration of the project plan had called for a larger number of smaller wind generators distributed more widely, that is on both the western most and central ridge lines with in the tract. In addition, to consolidating the proposed sites, upon recommendation of various natural resource review agencies, the project planning team redesigned the access roads location in the vicinity of the ten largest wetland impacts to reduce those wetland impacts to a more acceptable level. Finally, to address unavoidable impacts to wetlands and wildlife the project planning team has proposed to preserve an area around the head-vaters of Philipps Brook, adjacent to the Nash Stream State Forest. This proposed preservation area would be approximately 672 acres in size. Within this conservation

area a small amount of restoration and creation of several vernal pools would be accomplished. In addition, a conservation corridor along the ascending roads and ridge tops on Owlhead and Mount Kelsey are proposed to compensate for wildlife impacts occasioned by the introduction of the new facilities at elevations above 2700 feet of elevation. Information about the size and location of the mitigation areas can be seen on the project plans. The applicant has characterized the compensatory mitigation package as follows.

Summary of Granite Reliable Power Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Plan

Granite Reliable Power proposes to mitigate approximately 13.5 acres of wetland impact primarily by upland buffer preservation but also with vernal pool creation, restoration of perennial and seasonal stream crossings, and restoration of an existing logging yard. The proposed Phillips Brook Mitigation Area consists of approximately 672 acres located within the Town of Columbia and unincorporated Erving's Location. The site consist of two adjoining parcels, one 533 acres in the Town of Columbia and Erving's Location and the other 139 acres in the Town of Columbia. The area buffers Phillips Brook on the east. The Nash Stream State Forest abuts the site on portions of its western and southern border. Elevations range from 2,100 feet at the southeast corner, where Phillips Brook flows off site, to about 3,000 feet at a ridge top at the northwest corner of the site. Approximately 75 acres is above 2700 feet in elevation. The site is in the headwaters of Philips Brook watershed, identified by the Northern Forest Alliance as one of its priority areas for conservation (FY07 Strategic Conservation Opportunities Report, Page 7) and much of the watershed is considered high value wildlife habitat based on the NH Fish & Game's Wildlife Action Plan.

Wetland and upland soils within the mitigation area are glacial till and bedrock including higher elevation cryic soils. The wetlands on the site total approximately 150 acres with approximately 30 acres consisting of the very poorly drained Bucksport Muck soil. Perennial streams in the area are extensive and include approximately one mile of Phillips Brook at the eastern boundary and tributaries of Philips Brook including Hedgehog and Annis Brooks. Wetland classes include large areas of Palustrine forested wetland, Palustrine scrub shrub, emergent wetlands, and abandoned beaver impoundments. The perennial streams are classified as Riverine, upper perennial.

Land use on the site is currently commercial forest subject to logging. The site has a variety of forest types including well stocked northern hardwoods, low elevation spruce-fir, and high elevation spruce-fir. Logging and skid trails and old yards can be found on the site.

The mitigation area will be managed according to a management plan and a proposed conservation easement to be held by Coos County. Conservation restrictions proposed include no further subdivision, no structures, no ATV's or motorized vehicles, and no commercial logging.

Vernal pools are proposed to be created in two locations within the mitigation area in order to mitigate vernal pool impacts on the project. Additional project mitigation includes the removal of 17 existing culverts in perennial streams on existing logging roads within the project area. They will be replaced by box culverts and bridges and the stream channels restored. Additionally, approximately 100 existing logging road culverts in seasonal streams will be replaced and upgraded enhancing stream hydrology and quality.

Further restoration will include 2.55 acres of existing logging yard including both wetlands and uplands at the Kelsey laydown area. Once the project is complete this entire area will have wetlands and uplands restored.

High Elevation Mitigation

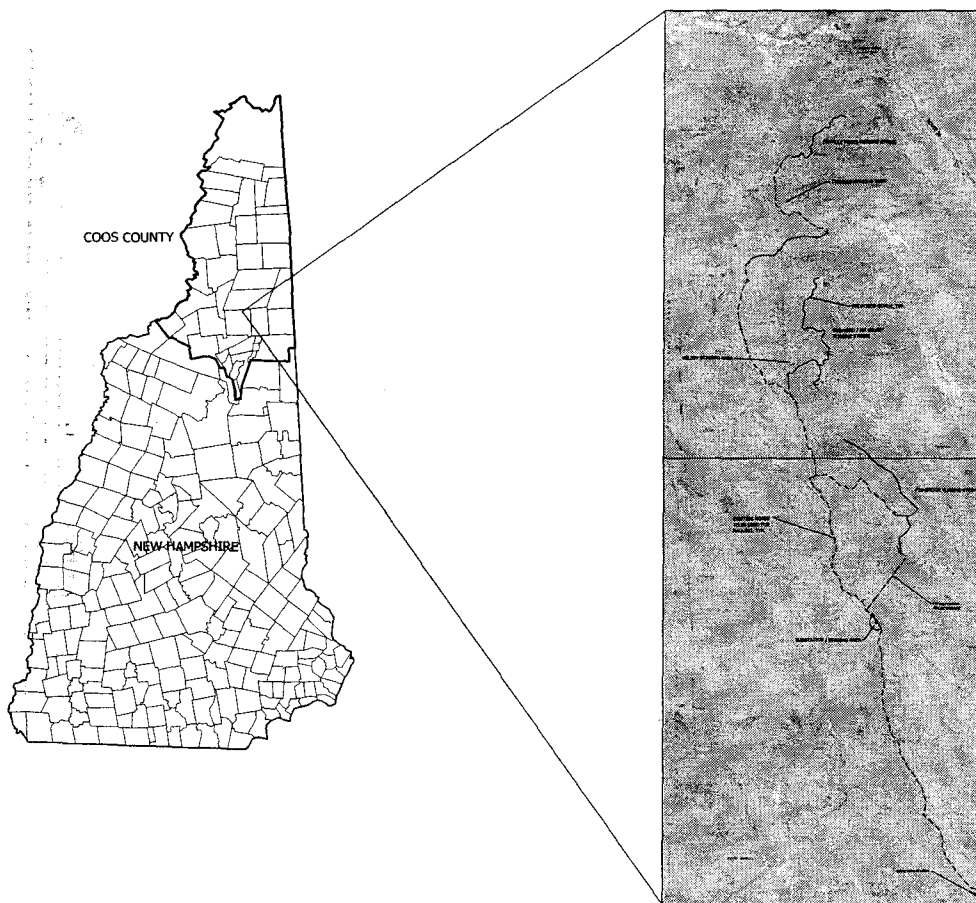
Granite Reliable Power (GRP) proposes to mitigate impacts to high elevation habitat by placing a 500 foot conservation easement around the Project facilities located on Owlhead and Mt. Kelsey ridge tops and a 200 foot buffer around the new access road leading up to the ridge from the existing road. This will prohibit any additional disturbance or impacts to this area beyond the Project itself. The conservation easement will include the facilities of the Project, though there will be an exemption that makes allowance for the construction, operation and continual maintenance of the Project.

The protected area would represent approximately 250 acres of high elevation Spruce Forest or Spruce-Fir forest, and a total of approximately 350 acres above 2700 feet (over 9% of the habitat available above 2700 feet on the Project's proposed ridges). The total protected area, including the area below 2700 feet, will be approximately 460 acres. This Plan will ensure that the increased access created by the installation of roads to the ridge tops of both Owlhead and Mt. Kelsey will not lead to additional impacts or development. Having this conservation area surrounding the access road and turbine string eliminates the option of using this new access road as a means to commercially harvest and access other high elevation areas for any other additional development purposes beyond the limit of disturbance for GRP. Furthermore, during the wetland delineation effort for the Project, a number of wetlands and vernal pools were also identified within this conserved area and these will be protected under this mitigation and avoidance Plan.

GRANITE RELIABLE POWER WIND PARK

COOS COUNTY, NEW HAMPSHIRE

JULY 2008
REVISED DECEMBER 2008



LOCATION PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 5,000'

OWNER:

GRANITE RELIABLE POWER, LLC
8 RAILROAD AVENUE
ESSEX, CT 06426
(860) 581-5010

CIVIL ENGINEER / SURVEYOR:

horizons
Engineering^u

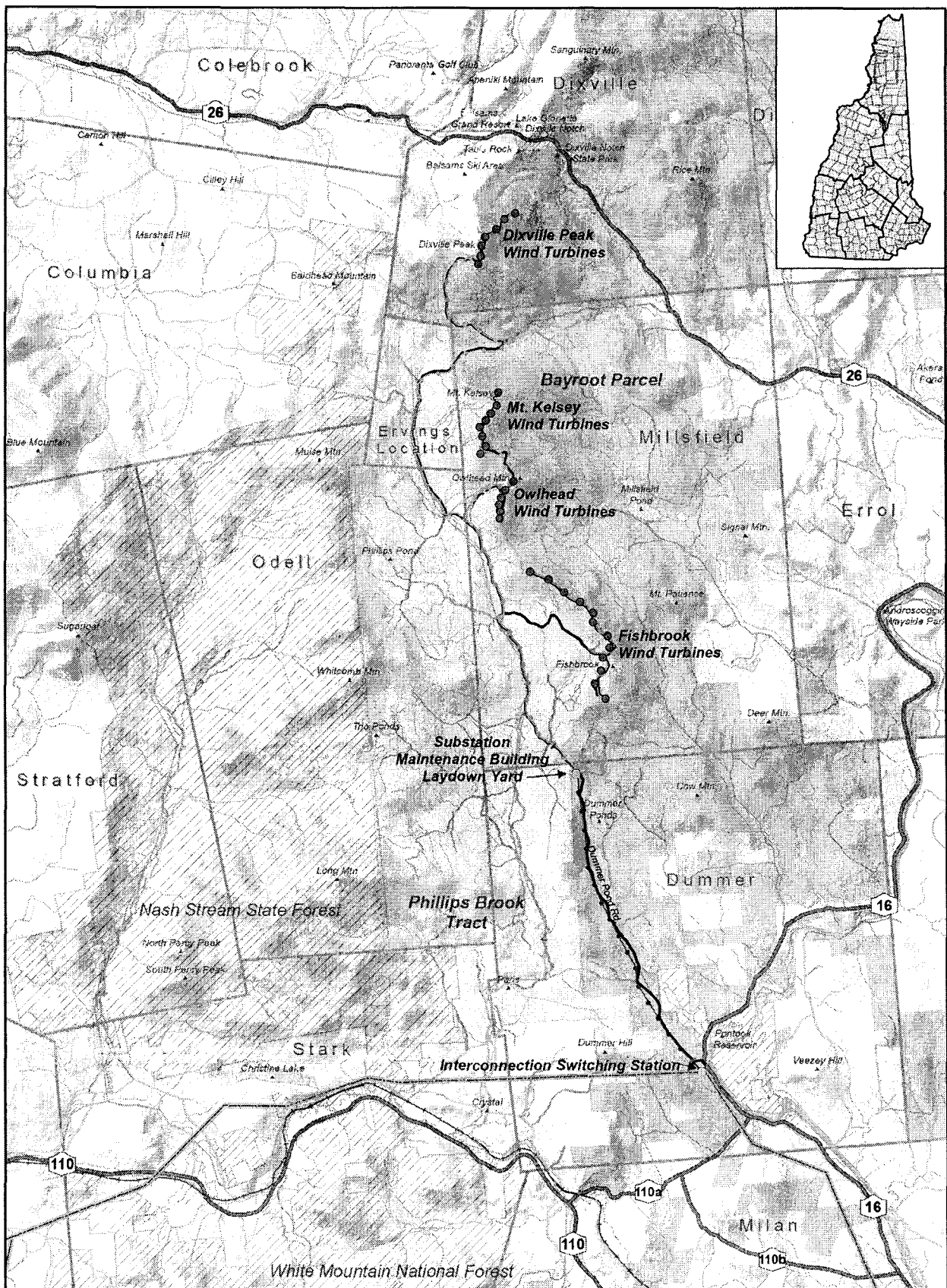
34 SCHOOL STREET
LITTLETON, NH 03561
(603) 444-4111

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER:

CBX ENERGY ENGINEERING
24 COMMON STREET
WATERVILLE, ME 04901
(207) 872-7239

COORDINATING WETLAND SCIENTIST:

LOBDELL & ASSOCIATES, INC.
88 GALE CHANDLER ROAD
LANDAFF, NH 03585
(603) 838-6880

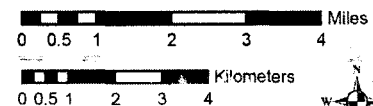
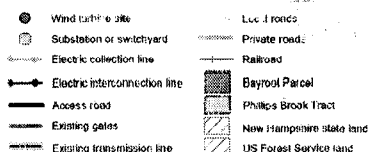


Geographic Features Near the Granite Reliable Power Windpark

Data: Publicly available data from NH GRANIT.
All other data is proprietary to Granite Reliable Power LLC.

July, 2008

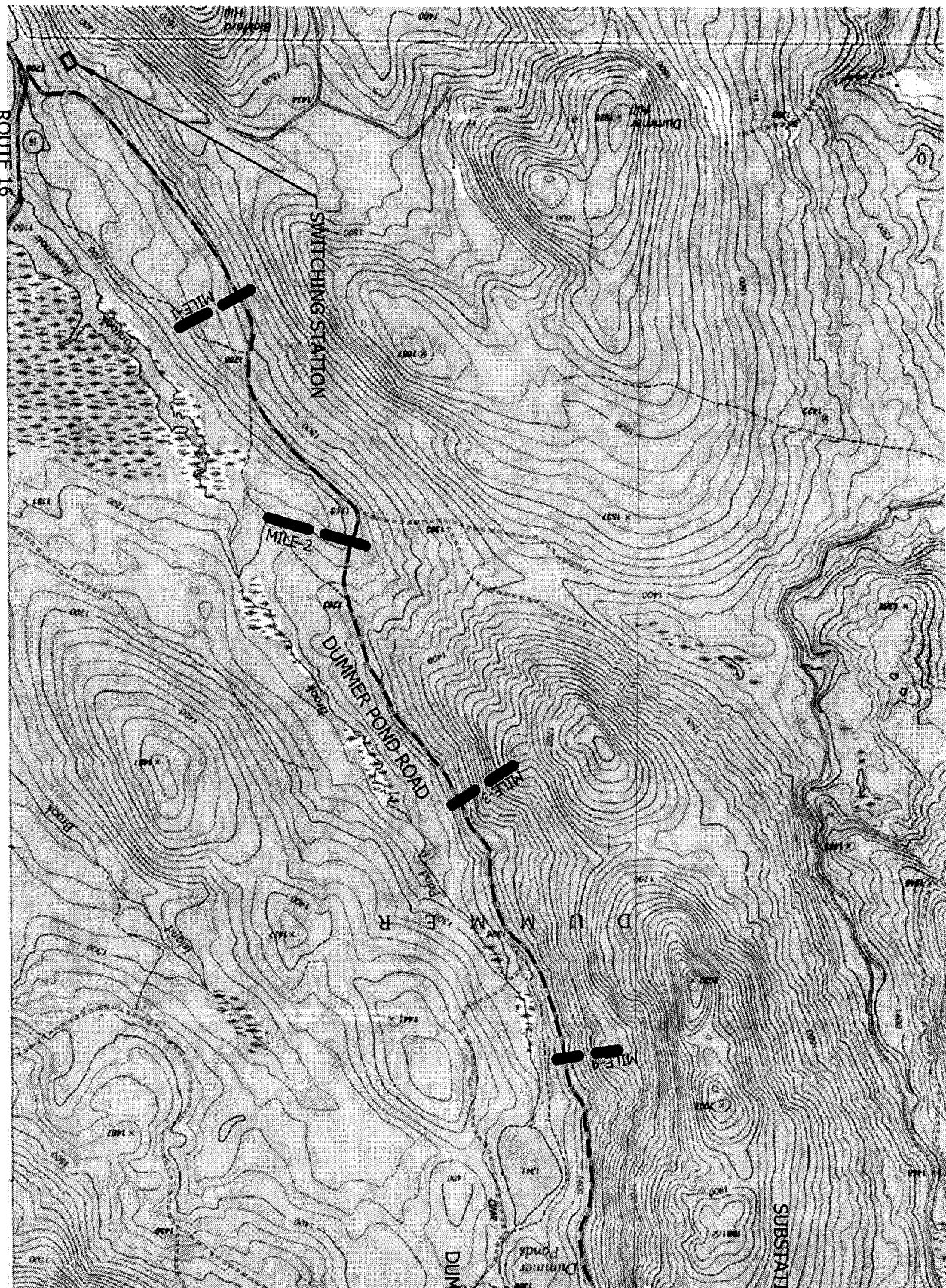
Granite Reliable Power LLC SEC Fig 2-3



EXISTING 20' ROAD TO BE UNIMPROVED
PROPOSED 25' ROAD
PROPOSED 34' ROAD
PROPOSED TOWER

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

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Equity
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OVERALL SHEET LEGEND

- EXISTING 20' ROAD TO BE UPGRADED
- PROPOSED 25' ROAD
- PROPOSED 34' ROAD
- PROPOSED TOWER



DATE: JULY 2008	PROJECT #: 07090
ENGINEER BY: PLB	DRAWN BY: PLB
CHECKED BY: SHL	ARCHIVE #: H-4498

GRANITE RELIABLE POWER, LLC
GRANITE RELIABLE POWER WIND PARK
COOS COUNTY, NEW HAMPSHIRE

OVERALL SITE PLAN

horizons
Engineering, LLC

34 School Street
Littleton, NH 03561
Phone 603.444.4111 - Fax 603.444.1343

NO.	DATE	REVISION DESCRIPTION	ENG	DWG

SHEET 2A



DATE:	PROJECT #:
JULY 2008	07090
ENGINEER BY:	DRAWN BY:
PLB	PLB
CHECKED BY:	ARCHIVE #:
SML	H-4498

SHEET 2B

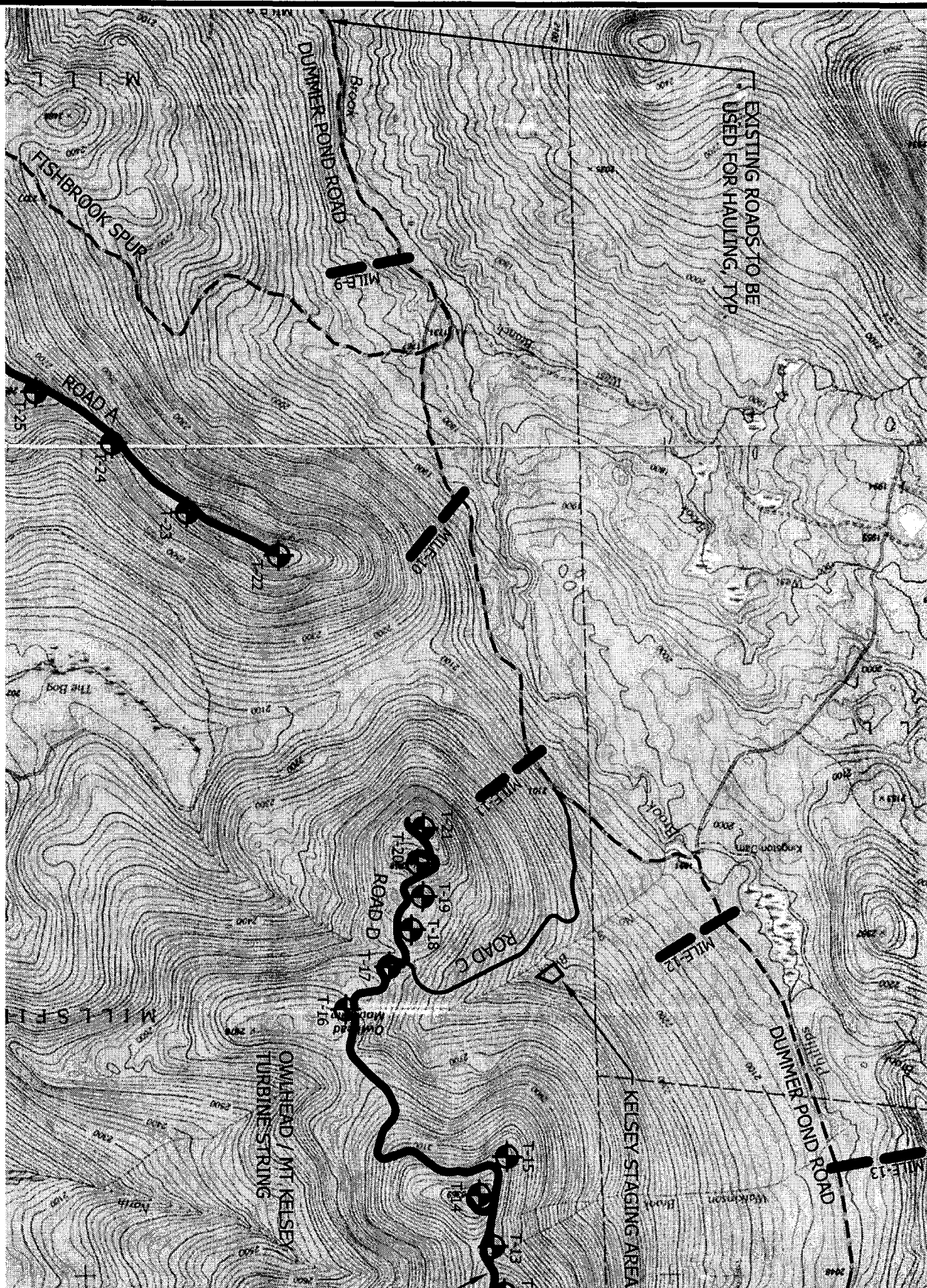
GRANITE RELIABLE POWER, LLC
GRANITE RELIABLE POWER WIND PARK
COOS COUNTY, NEW HAMPSHIRE

OVERALL SITE PLAN

horizons
Engineering LLC

34 School Street
Littleton, NH 03561
Phone 603.444.4111 - Fax 603.444.1343

NO.	DATE	REVISION DESCRIPTION	ENG	DWG



DATE: JULY 2008	PROJECT #: 07090
ENGINEER BY: PLB	DRAWN BY: PLB
CHECKED BY: SML	ARCHIVE #: H-4498
SHEET 2C	

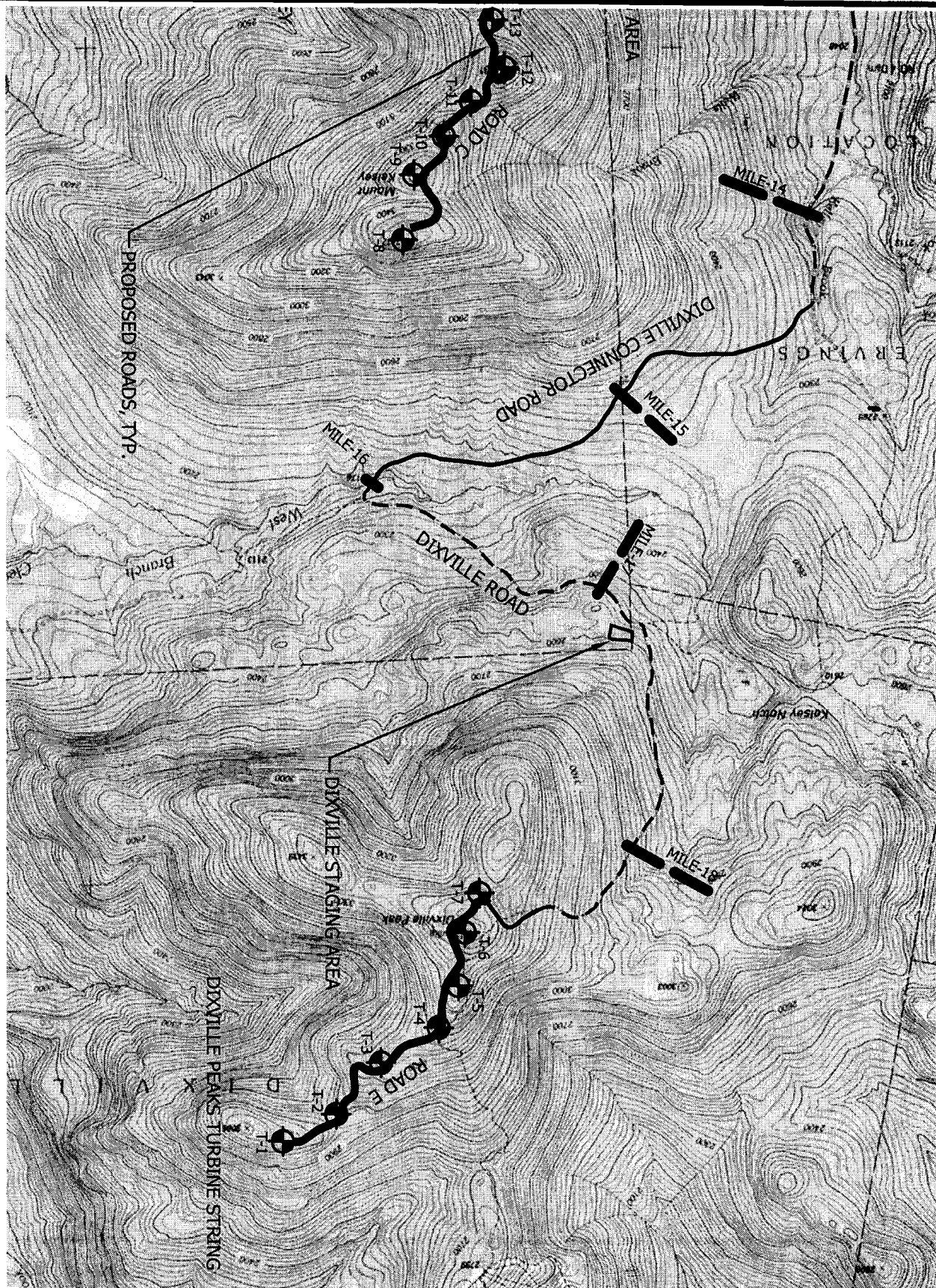
GRANITE RELIABLE POWER, LLC
GRANITE RELIABLE POWER WIND PARK
COOS COUNTY, NEW HAMPSHIRE

OVERALL SITE PLAN

horizons
Engineering

34 School Street
Littleton, NH 03561
Phone 603.444.4111 - Fax 603.444.1343

NO.	DATE	REVISION DESCRIPTION	ENG	DWG

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Phone 603.444.4111 - Fax 603.444.1343

Littleton, NH 03561
34 School Street

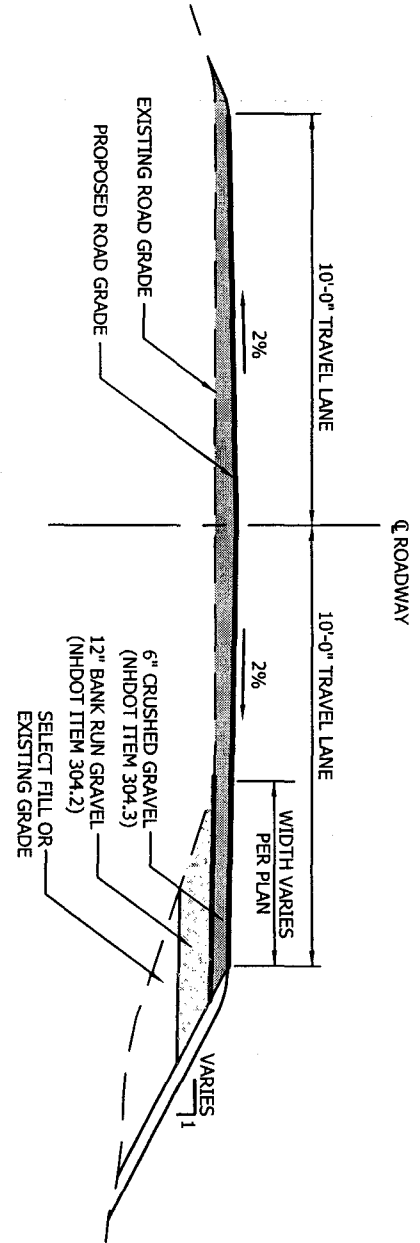


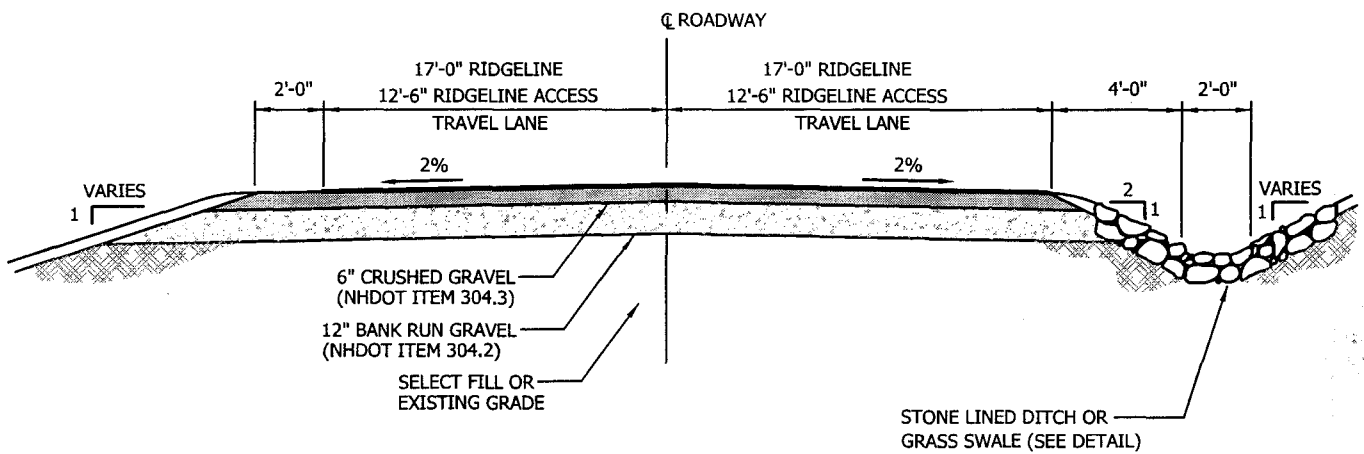
TYPICAL ROAD CROSS-SECTION DETAIL

GRANITE RELIABLE POWER, LLC
GRANITE RELIABLE POWER WIND PARK
COOS COUNTY, NEW HAMPSHIRE

PROJECT #: 07090
ENGINE'D BY: PLB
DRAWN BY: PLB
DATE: JAN 09

TYPICAL ROAD CROSS SECTION
FOR UPGRADING EXISTING ROADS
NOT TO SCALE





TYPICAL ROAD CROSS SECTION WITHOUT GUARD RAIL

NOT TO SCALE



34 School Street
Littleton, NH 03561
Phone 603.444.4111 - Fax 603.444.1343

GRANITE RELIABLE POWER, LLC
GRANITE RELIABLE POWER WIND PARK

COOS COUNTY, NEW HAMPSHIRE

TYPICAL ROAD CROSS-SECTION DETAIL

PROJECT #:

07090

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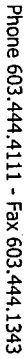
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DATE:

JAN 09



34 School Street
Littleton, NH 03561

GRANITE RELIABLE POWER, LLC
GRANITE RELIABLE POWER WIND PARK

COOS COUNTY, NEW HAMPSHIRE

TYPICAL ROAD CROSS-SECTION DETAIL

PROJECT #:

07090

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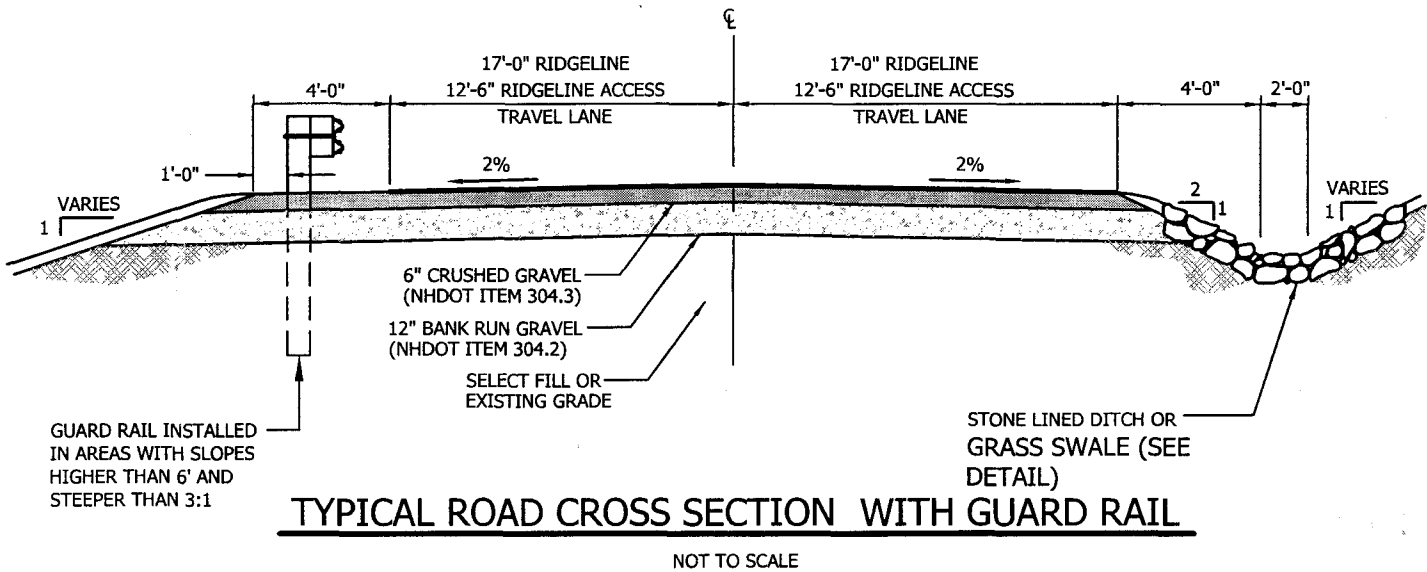
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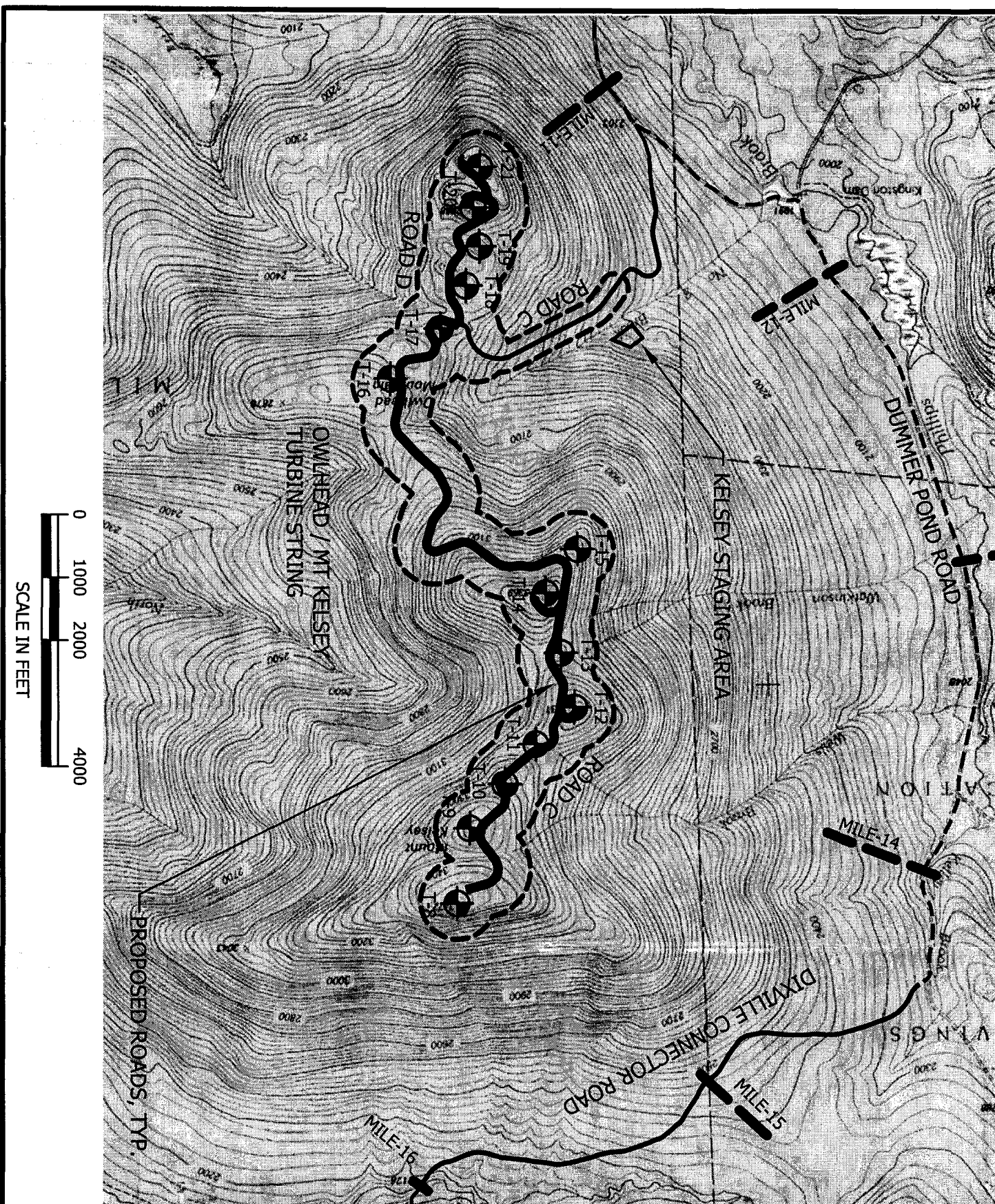
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DATE: JULY 2008	PROJECT #: 07029
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EXHIBIT	

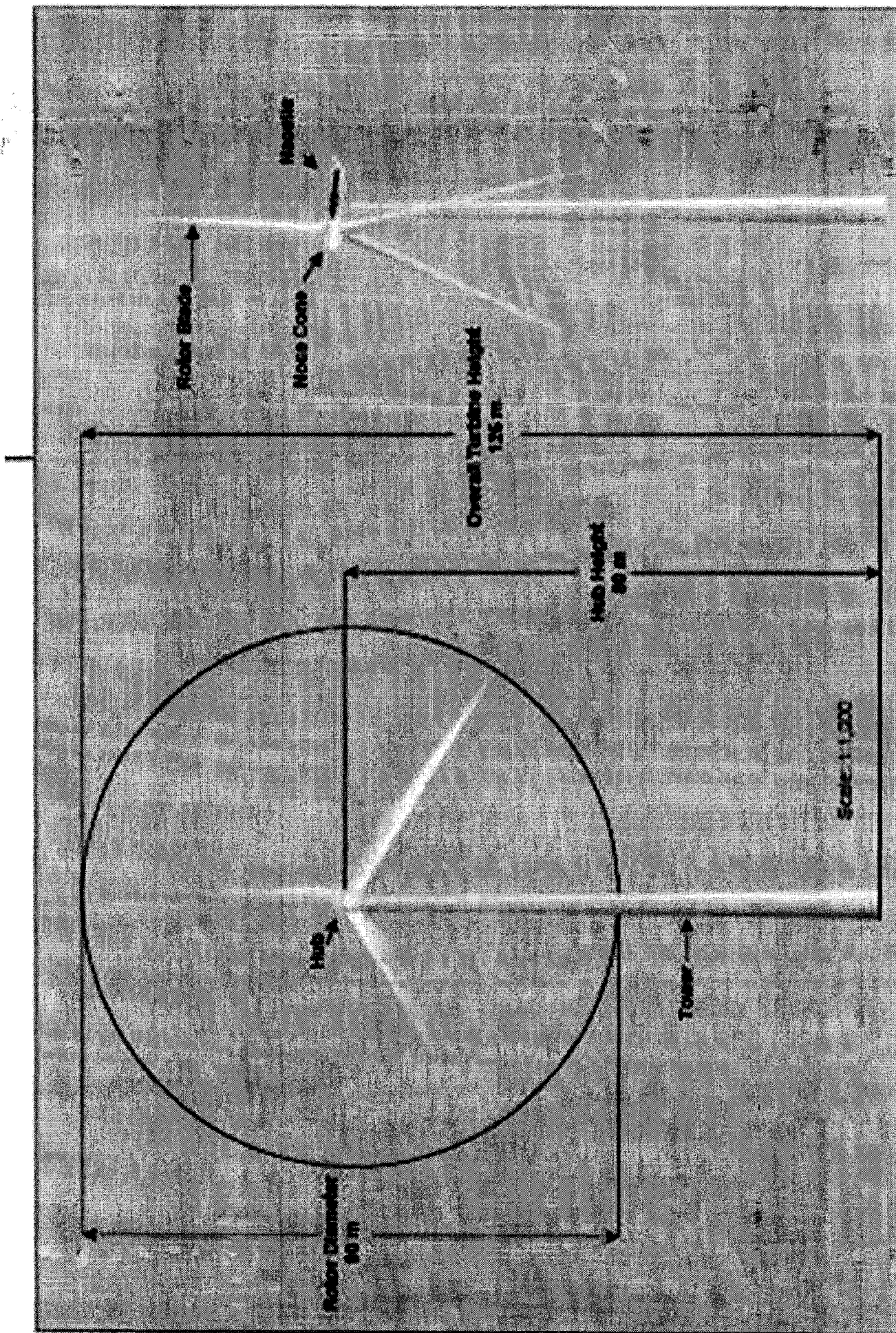
GRANITE RELIABLE POWER, LLC
 GRANITE RELIABLE POWER WIND PARK
 COOS COUNTY, NEW HAMPSHIRE

 HIGH ELEVATION MITIGATION AREA

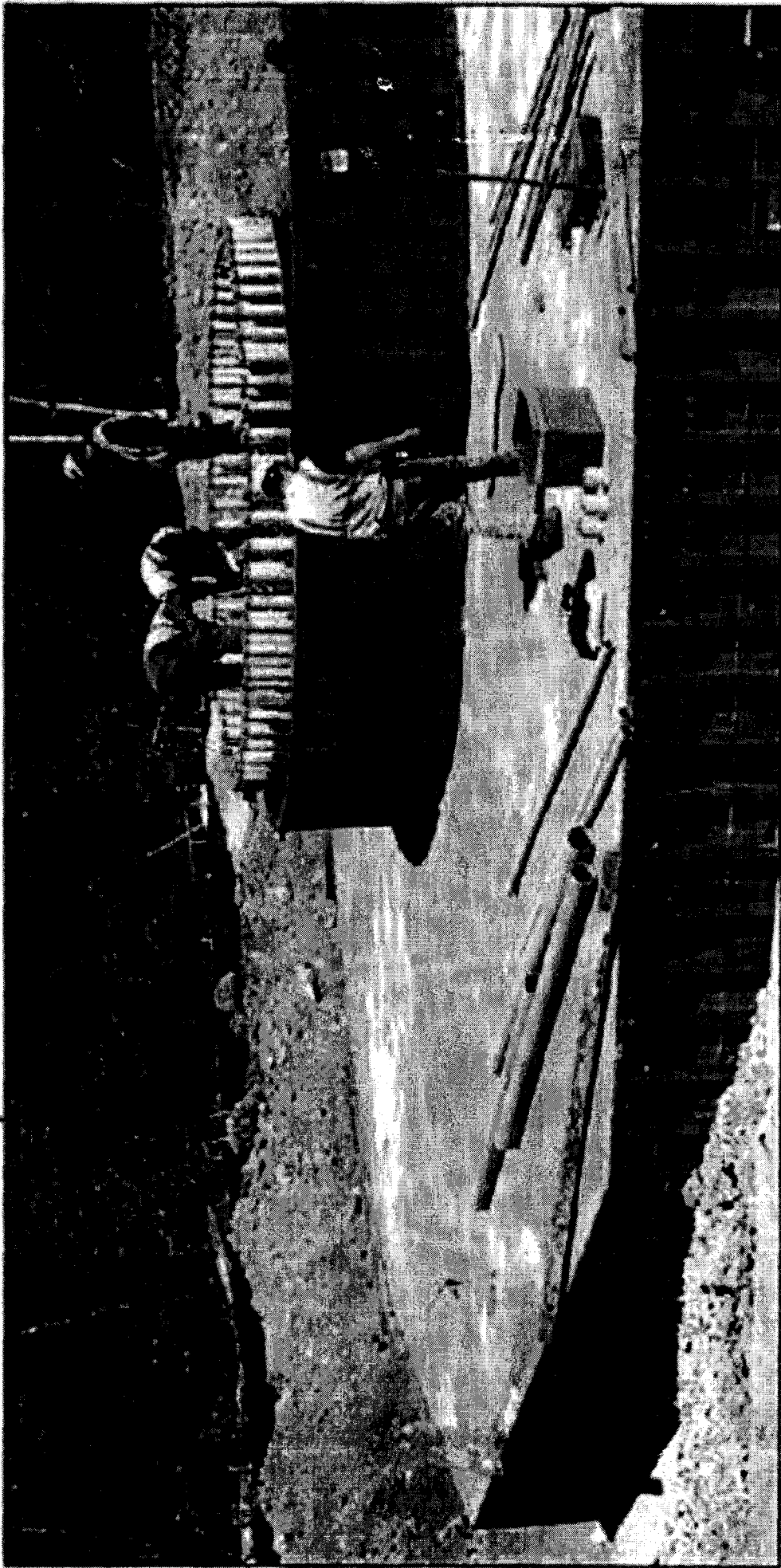
horizons
Engineering^{INC}

34 School Street
Littleton, NH 03561
Phone 603.444.4111 - Fax 603.444.1343

NO.	DATE	REVISION DESCRIPTION	ENG	DWG



Tower



Tower foundation